

# SPEECH

OF

## MR. HOUSTON, OF TEXAS,

FAVORING

### A MEXICAN PROTECTORATE.

DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, APRIL 20, 1858.

Mr. HOUSTON. I move to take up the resolution I had the honor to submit some weeks since on the subject of a protectorate over Mexico and Central America; and I believe it is in order to offer some remarks on that motion.

Mr. HUNTER. I must say, in regard to that motion, that I shall have no objection to it, provided it will not supersede the consideration of the special order. When is the hour for its consideration?

The PRESIDENT *pro tempore*. At one o'clock.

Mr. HUNTER. Then I will say that of course I do not object to taking up the resolution, if at one o'clock we shall proceed with the special order.

Mr. GWIN. I thought the deficiency bill was the special order for twelve and a half o'clock.

The PRESIDENT *pro tempore*. The special order was fixed for half-past twelve o'clock yesterday; but it is for one o'clock to-day.

Mr. HOUSTON. I hope I may be allowed to conclude my remarks; they are limited.

Mr. HUNTER. The Senator from Texas tells me that he will not occupy more than an hour, and as I am anxious to go on with the deficiency bill, perhaps it would be better that he should commence now. It will only postpone the consideration of that bill for half an hour. I hope the Senate will consent to let him take up his resolution.

Mr. HOUSTON. I move to take up the resolution for the purpose of offering a substitute, and proposing that it be referred to a special committee to consist of seven. I do not suppose that will lead to any argument whatever. I wish to offer some views explanatory of the object of the resolution.

The motion was agreed to; and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution submitted by Mr. Houston in regard to establishing a protectorate over Mexico and other Central American States.

Mr. HOUSTON. Mr. President, it will be recollected that a few weeks ago I offered a resolution to instruct the Committee on Foreign Relations to inquire into the expediency of establishing a protectorate over Mexico and the Central American States by this Government. That resolution, without being amply discussed, was laid upon the table. I have risen for the purpose of proposing a substitute for it, by which the inquiry shall be confined to Mexico, and submitted to a select committee.

It is, perhaps, nothing more than respectful to Great Britain, inasmuch as we have been negotiating with her for several years in relation to Honduras and the Mosquito shore, that the differences between the two countries should be amicably adjusted, if possible, before we proceed to intervene for the regulation of the affairs of the five puny States beyond Mexico. Moreover, the condition of most of those States, bad as it is, is incalculably better than that of our poor, distracted, adjoining neighbor. Their public demoralization, too, affects us less injuriously.

The State, sir, which I have enjoyed the honor of representing in this chamber, in part, with my lost but unforgotten colleague, since the emblem of her national independence took its place among the galaxy of stars which is unfurled over our heads, has a paramount interest in the establishment of orderly government in Mexico.



It is as essential to her public morality and general prosperity as is that of any one State in the Union to another. The line of partition between the United States and Mexico stretches nearly two thousand miles—one thousand of which is Texan. Along a considerable portion of that line, on our side, savages abound, over whose propensities for the commission of crime on the inhabitants on the other side we can exercise, although obligated by solemn treaty stipulations to do so, no effectual restraint. On account of the depredations incessantly perpetrated by the Camanches and other tribes upon the Mexicans, the border population is steadily receding into the interior; and instead of progressive civilization, the chances multiply, from day to day, that the country will be turned over to barbarism—to the savages now within our own limits. Mexico cannot prevent it, because she is never free from civil war or other intestine commotions; and we cannot, at any cost, short of hermetically sealing our frontier. Thus good neighborhood on either part, as matters at present stand, is next to an impossibility. The one cannot repel, and the other cannot pursue. The wild Indian in his forest wanderings has no respect for, if he even had a knowledge of, the lines which separate civilized nations. He roams wherever his untutored mind points the way, making in his strides the powerless—whether the white or the red man—his victim. Different, vastly different, is the condition of the neighborhood on our northern frontier. The inhabitants of the British Provinces are so assimilated in character and identified in interests with the inhabitants of the Northern States that they are as much the same as if they constituted one people. Practically there is nothing but a political line of division between them. The Marcy-Elgin treaty cemented their intercourse, and commercially annexed the Canadas and other adjacent possessions of Queen Victoria to those States. We gave to the colonies every thing that they asked—every thing that they could have desired.

The Senator from New York told us the other day, in substance, that the North was mighty, and that it would speedily become still mightier. In the majesty of its power it may, at no distant day, bring those colonies into the Union, and particularly if they should become dissatisfied with the rule of the mother country. Nor can it be pleaded that they are not prepared for admission. Every day that passes—such is the frequency of their communication with the citizens of Michigan, New York, and New England—they receive practical lessons in the science of self-government, adopting of course the tenets of anti-slavery. Their number does not greatly exceed a third of that of Mexico, and yet they probably contribute ten times as much to the prosperity of the North as Mexico does to the prosperity of the South. I do not mention this in the language of sectional complaint, but in justification of the measure I propose.

The notion, sir, that Mexico will ever help herself out of the extremities to which she has been so deplorably reduced, is too absurd to be entertained by a rational mind. The more she struggles, ostensibly for the bettering of her condition, the more anarchical she becomes. To bring such a population as hers into the Union would be to assume the gravest of responsibilities. To suffer her to be parcelled out by fillibusters—each chief perhaps a despot—would be to fraternize with every desperate adventurer in our own land, and to invite to our continent all the wild, vicious spirits of the other hemisphere. Nor could we consent, without palpable dishonor, to see her placed in the leading-strings of any European Power, even were there a disposition manifested to so place her. We have, then, no alternative, if we put the slightest value upon our interests, and are not disposed to disregard our duty, but to arrange plans immediately for ruling her wisely, and, as far as possible, gently.

In the consummation of great measures we are apt to be—perhaps a little too apt—a closely cost-calculating people. In the matter of the proposed protectorate of Mexico, one of the first questions which is likely to suggest itself to our countrymen is that relating to the expenditure it will involve. Happily, this can be readily and satisfactorily answered.

The protectorate must be self-protecting—the expense incident to it defrayed by the protected. The General Government of Mexico could probably be administered, taking a term of ten years, for \$6,000,000; while her custom receipts, under a well-regulated and honestly administered revenue tariff, would double that amount.

Our Gulf and Pacific squadrons would be ample for the protection of her commerce in those quarters, and without subjecting us to additional outlays. Five thousand reliable regular troops, properly garrisoned and distributed, would insure the establishment and preservation of internal order; and the adoption of a good police system would eventuate in bringing to justice, and effectually subduing, the rapacious and blood-thirsty bandits who infest her highways. Hence it is clear that we have



it in our power to improve the condition of Mexico immeasurably; to breathe the breath of new life into her nostrils; and without incurring the risk of a dollar. What a salutary change would this be, not only for both countries, but for the world at large!

Faithless to her engagements, Mexico has been for a long time but a little better than a national outlaw. She is powerful for the commission of wrongs, but powerless for their redress. Our Department of State is the repository for the grievances of our citizens by her highhanded deeds; but nothing more than a repository, since the securing of indemnities for outrages has become a somewhat obsolete idea. Those grievances are doubtless magnified in a pecuniary point of view, as grievances ever are where a government is responsible; but still there should be an authority in Mexico with which they may be adjusted and provided for, as ascertained to be valid. The claimants might select one commissioner for their examination, Mexico another; and, in case of disagreement, the two an umpire. So with the inhabitants of other countries, who have experienced wrongs at her hands which have not been redressed. With respect to her funded debt, it amounts to about fifty-five million dollars, and is chiefly owned in England and on the Continent. It was consolidated in 1846, by a convention between the Government of Mexico and a committee of the bondholders, by which it was to bear five per cent. coupon interest. The war in which Mexico became involved with the United States so enfeebled her that she was unable to provide the interest, or a single dividend of it, until some time along in 1850, when she sent a commissioner to London to represent the state of her finances, and to make a new proposal to her creditors. This proposal was to the end that she would pay out of the California indemnity money the interest in arrears, and pledge one-fourth of the custom-house receipts on imports as well as exports for the payment of the future interest of the debt, provided the bondholders would agree to diminish the rate of interest from five to three per cent. To this, after some hesitation, they consented. Since then, such is the faithlessness with which she has acted, and such the subterfuges that she has had to resort to in order to sustain her sickly existence, that she has appropriated to herself nearly all the customs dues received; having remitted only a sufficient amount to pay four of the semi annual three per cent. interest dividends which have since matured. With this arrangement, to which Mexico is bound, we could not interfere, as her protector, unless with the assent of the bondholders. It might, however, probably be modified to their own and her advantage. The assumption of it by this Government, as a consequence of the protectorate is too idle a supposition to be entertained. Great Britain could not expect more from us in the premises than to see that the portion of the revenue from the customs stipulated for was regularly placed at the disposal of those bondholders when collected. This would in all likelihood defray the interest as it accrued, besides creating a sinking fund for the absorption, in a few years, of the principal, and thus extricate the hand of our unfortunate neighbor from the lion's mouth. England, as I shall presently show, would be well enough pleased to have it so extricated.

Mr. President, I have looked, but looked in vain, in both wings of this Capitol, for a fellow-member who was a fellow-member with me when the celebrated Monroe doctrine was announced. Of the two hundred and sixty-one Senators and Representatives who constituted the Congress which commenced its session on the first Monday of December, 1823, I stand here alone, and I will not disguise it, as one who regards himself as among the last of his race—as one who feels that he is approaching his journey's end on life's pilgrimage, and who has now no other ambition to gratify than to “render the State some service.” All those worthy spirits, alas! have, one by one, quitted earth, with the exception of President Buchanan, ex-President Van Buren, ex-Senator Branch, ex-Senator Rives, Governor Letcher, and Governor Wickliffe, of Kentucky, Governor Johnson, of Virginia, General Mercer, General Campbell, of South Carolina, Mr. Saunders, of North Carolina, Mr. Stuart, of Pennsylvania, Mr. Blair, of Tennessee, and possibly two or three others. To say nothing of the distinguished merits of the survivors, in that great Congress might have been seen, in the full meridian of strong intellect, the Jacksons and Clays, the Websters and Randolphs, the Macons and Forsyths, the Bentons and Livingstons, the Barbours and Johnsons, the McLanes and McDuffies, the Kings and Smiths, the Taylors and Hamiltons, the Floyds and Holmeses, the Ruggleses and Bartletts. It was to such men, chosen alike for their wisdom and integrity, representing twenty-four sovereign States and thirteen millions of inhabitants, that Mr. Monroe (counselled by a Cabinet composed of John Quincy Adams, William H. Crawford, John C. Calhoun, Samuel L. Southard, William Wirt, and John McLean) addressed himself in such confident and resolute language with reference to the ulterior purposes of this coun-



try. I shall never cease to remember the exultant delight with which his noble sentiments were hailed. They met not only with a cordial, but an enthusiastic reception both in and out of Congress. They were approved with as much unanimity as if the entire population of the Union had been previously prepared to re-echo their utterance. At that glorious epoch there was a broad, towering spirit of nationality extant. The States stood in the endearing relation to each other of *one for all, and all for one*. The Constitution was their political text-book, the glory of the Republic their resolute aim. Practically, there was but one party, and that party animated by but one object—our upward and onward career. As if in atonement for the wrong inflicted upon the country by the angry Missouri controversy, which was then fresh in every mind, there seemed to be no circumscription to that genuine patriotism which everywhere within our embraces displayed itself. May we not trust, Mr. President, that a similar result will ensue from the still more angry Kansas controversy, and that the benign influences of such results will be as durable as creation? This will assuredly be the case if the only question asked within this Capitol when an embryo State asks for admission into the Union is: *Does her constitution conform to the national requirement—“a republican form of government?”* We have cheapened ourselves immensely in the world's esteem, and I fear polluted our system of government, in our extravagant disbursements, which have been overlooked in the profitless strife which had its emanation in the hostility to the institution of negro slavery. Let each new State, hereafter, come slave or free, as she chooses, and we shall henceforth have peace, the peace of union as contemplated by the authors and founders of our Republic. We have grander ends to attain than the frittering away of a healthful existence upon such loathsome, ignoble subjects. Our aspirations should be to spread our heaven-inspired principles, by our lofty public bearing, on to the most remote and benighted regions; proudly, in the rectitude of our intentions, taking our place at the very head of the nations of the earth. It is for us, if we are equal to our mission, to realize for America the poet's vision of the future of England:

“Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,  
Her honor and the greatness of her name  
Shall be and make new nations; she shall flourish,  
And, like a mountain cedar, reach her branches  
To all the plains about her.”

But, sir, to return to the Monroe doctrine. In their notice of the message at the time it was promulgated, the then as now calm, observing editors of the *National Intelligencer* remarked:

“It does honor to its author, and the most material parts are conceived in the true spirit of the days in which he first engaged in the scenes of public life.”

Sir, that doctrine is, perhaps, quite familiar to every member of this Senate; but such has been my unrelaxing pride in it for nearly thirty-five years, increased, if possible, by the fact that I am the only person entitled to a seat in this building to whom it was addressed, that I cannot refrain from its perusal, nor from narrating its history and explaining its purpose.

Our relations at that time were not in a satisfactory condition with the Emperor of all the Russias—the differences having grown out of a claim of that autocrat to a portion of this continent—and in this connection Mr. Monroe made the emphatic declaration:

“In the discussions to which this interest has given rise, and in the arrangements in which they may terminate, the occasion has been judged proper for asserting as a principle, in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Power.”

Subsequently he reviewed the political condition of the two hemispheres, and referring to the desire of the Holy Alliance to re-establish Spain in her late American possessions, he fearlessly stated that—

“We owe it, therefore, to candor, and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their parts to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European Power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States.” \* \* \* \* \*

“It is impossible that the Allied Powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent [American] without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can any one believe that our Southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference.”



Shortly after the settlement of Europe by the Congress of Vienna, the more despotic continental Governments suddenly became seriously troubled on account of the liberal sentiments which strikingly manifested themselves in Spain and elsewhere. The Holy Alliance, in its conferences at Troppau and Laybach, declared eternal hostility to all popular institutions, announcing its purpose to "repress republican opinions wherever they might be found, and to extinguish the feelings that prompted them." To use its avowed language:

"To preserve what is legally established was, as it ought to be, the invariable principle of their policy. Useful or necessary changes in legislation, and in the administration of States, ought only to emanate from the free will and the intelligent and well-weighed conviction of those *whom God has rendered responsible for power.*"

The Czar of Russia has promised Ferdinand of Spain that if he would overthrow the constitution of that kingdom he would assist him, not only in fortifying his throne, but also in re-establishing his authority over the revolting Spanish-American provinces. To this proposition England dissented in terms so decided as to cause its relinquishment—an occurrence not displeasing to Austria, as she was averse to the marching of a large Russian army across her bosom in the direction of the Pyrenees. But France, acting in the interest of the Holy Alliance, and probably with a view to selfish ulterior objects, determined to intervene in the affairs of Spain, and—under the alleged excuse to England that she wished to prevent the yellow fever, which was prevailing in Portugal, from entering her limits—she established an army in the confines of the Spanish realm, which she designated a "*cordon sanitaire.*" The disappearance of the disease, however, from the peninsula did not lead to its withdrawal; and subsequently she bestowed upon it the title of the "army of observation." But it was not long—in the summer of 1823—until she marched it over her boundary and undertook to control Spain. When, in 1808, Napoleon attempted to place the crown of that realm durably upon the head of his brother Joseph, he unquestionably contemplated the acquisition by his house of all the distant possessions. This idea might not have been the actuating one in the armed occupation of Spain by France; but it is certain that she regarded those possessions as a prize worth securing, if they could be obtained at a reasonable or indeed an extravagant cost. She saw distinctly that they were as good as lost to the mother country, which was in a deplorable moral, financial, commercial, and physical condition. Mr. Canning, as Premier, made unceasing efforts to influence France to recall her army from Spain, but they were disregarded. This enlightened British statesman boldly arrayed his Government against the principles of the Holy Alliance, and lost no suitable occasion to publicly proclaim the sentiments by which the British were animated—sentiments which were warmly responded to at home, and by the larger portion of the continental public. They were simply these, and, from their very nature, in violent antagonism with those entertained by the stipendiaries of the crowned head contrivers of the Congress of Verona: *The people, the origin of all power, the object of all governments, the good of the governed.*

Nor were suitable opportunities left unavailed of by the Premier for strengthening and cementing the ties of friendship between his own and this country. In a speech which he delivered to his townsmen of Liverpool, on the 25th of August, 1823, at a banquet which they gave to Christopher Hughes, our excellent Minister to the Netherlands, he said among other things:

"On such an occasion he might be permitted to express the gratification he felt in common with the great mass of the intelligent and liberal men of both countries, to see the animosities necessarily attendant on a state of hostility so rapidly wearing away, and giving place to feelings so consonant to the true interests of the two nations, united by a common language, a common spirit of commercial enterprise, and a common regard for well-regulated liberty. It appeared to him that of two such nations the relative position was not wholly unlike that which occasionally occurred in families: where a child having perhaps displeased a parent—a daughter, for instance—in contracting a connection offensive to that parent's feelings, some estrangement would for awhile necessarily ensue; but after a lapse of time the irritation is forgotten, the force of blood again prevails, and the daughter and the mother stand together against the world."

About the time this speech was delivered, Mr. Canning is reported to have had an interview with our Minister near the Court of St. James, in which he explained the policy of his Government with respect to Spain and the South American States, desiring the co-operation of the United States, if necessary, in its enforcement. Our Minister, it appears, had no instructions upon the subject, but transmitted the proposal to Washington for consideration. On the 31st of March previous the Prime Minister wrote to the British Minister at Madrid to intimate to the French Minister near that Court, in terms sufficiently distinct to admit of no misconception, that while Great Britain utterly disclaimed any intention of appropriating to herself any of the former colonies or dependencies of Spain, she would not tacitly consent to



their acquisition, or that of either of them, by France. This led to a conference between himself and the Prince de Polignac, the French Minister, on the 9th of October, 1823, in which the latter proposed:

"That in the interests of humanity, and especially in that of the Spanish colonies, it would be worthy of the European Governments to concert together the means of calming, in those distant and scarcely civilized regions, passions blinded by party spirit, and to endeavor to bring back to a principle of union in government, whether monarchical or aristocratical, people among whom absurd and dangerous theories were now keeping up agitation and disunion."

But the conference terminated without a result, Mr. Canning no doubt deeming it better to await intelligence from this capital relative to his proposal to our Minister. The world-renowned message contained Mr. Monroe's answer. It was as unexpected as a destructive earthquake, and dispelled every hope which had been indulged in Paris, and in autocratic circles elsewhere, of the re-establishment of Spain in her lost possessions. It was thus that the triumph of England over the Holy Alliance was effected, as was explained, when Parliament met in the following February, by the Marquis of Lansdowne in the House of Lords, and Mr. Brougham in the House of Commons.

In the discussion upon the speech from the throne, at the opening of the session, the Marquis observed, in the House of Lords, in commenting upon that part of it relating to the non-recognition of the Spanish-American States in terms of disapproval:

"But if we had been tardy it was a satisfaction to find that America had on this occasion taken that decisive step which so well became its character and its interest. As that important decision was of the utmost consequence to every portion of the world where freedom was valued, he could not grudge to the United States the glory of having thus early thrown her shield over those struggles for freedom which were so important, not merely to America herself, but to the whole world." \* \* \* "Let their lordships look to what had happened in the United States. There a population of three millions had, in the course of forty years, been increased to ten millions."

In the House of Commons, during the same day and in the same discussion, Mr. (now Lord) Brougham remarked:

"The Holy Alliance! [A cry of 'hear!'] What, was this designation of these sovereigns doubted? Why, it was not his, but that which they had given themselves. There was but one view that could be taken of that league of conspirators and of the motives of their alliance." \* \* \*

"The question, however, with regard to South America, he believed was now disposed of, or nearly so; for an event had recently happened, than which no event had ever dispersed greater joy, exultation, and gratitude over all the freemen in Europe—an event in which he, as an Englishman, connected by ties of blood and language with America, took peculiar satisfaction. An event, he repeated, had happened which was decisive on that subject; and that event was the message of the President of the United States to Congress. The line of policy which that message disclosed became a great and independent nation; and he hoped his Majesty's Ministers would be prevented by no mean pride or paltry jealousy from following so noble and illustrious an example. He trusted that as the United States had had the glory of setting, we should have the good taste to follow, the example of holding fast by free institutions, and of assisting our brother freemen in whatever part of the globe they should be found in placing bounds to that impious alliance which, if it ever succeeded in bringing down the Old World to its own degraded level, would not hesitate to attempt to master the New World too."

Mr. Canning, the Premier, in reply, stated that—

"In some of the principles laid down in the message of the President of the United States he entirely agreed; and he might be permitted to say that, long before the message went forth, it was distinctly admitted in the State Papers of Great Britain that the question between the mother country and the colonies was not a fit subject for foreign interference; but he did not agree in the principle that the parent State had not a right, if she could, to recover her own colonial dominions." [Mr. Brougham motioned that such a principle was not laid down.] "Mr. Canning, continuing. In the paper to which the honorable and learned gentleman referred there was a passage which many individuals construed in that way, and he certainly understood the honorable and learned gentleman so to have construed it. He was clearly of opinion, with the President of the United States, that no foreign State had a right to interfere pending the dispute between the colonies and the mother country; but he was as strongly of opinion that the mother country had a right to attempt to recover her colonies if she thought proper."

Mr. Canning's construction of the message was clearly correct, as will have been seen from the extracts which I have read from that document. Spain, ruled by France, as the swordsman of the Holy Alliance, was included in the declaration that—

"With the Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view an interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny by ANY European Power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States."

It has often been asserted, sir, that Mr. Canning originated the Monroe doctrine. It has been seen to what extent he is entitled to that credit. The announcement of that doctrine, as valuable a purpose as it served his Government, perhaps took no one more by surprise than himself. Little could it have been imagined that a young republic, with nothing like half of its present population, could summon resolution to proclaim at the top of its voice, to all the potentates of the other hemisphere, in



substance: "You may manage your affairs as you choose there, but you shall not carry your system or systems of government to the world of the West. With stout hearts and strong minds, and, above all, relying upon God's favor, we will prevent the establishment of any new European alliances in this hemisphere, or perish in the effort."

At the time of preparing his message it may have been seen by Mr. Monroe that circumstances might arise rendering it necessary that the exercise of a controlling influence over one or another of those young republics would become a necessity on the part of this country. Mr. Clay, in his zeal for their recognition, has asserted, in his place in the other House, that "it would be impugning the wisdom of Almighty God to suppose that he had created beings incapable of self-government;" but Mr. Monroe was not, perhaps, quite so sanguine. He, however, was determined, as far as his official influence could be advantageously employed in the instance of those republics, that the experiment should have a fair trial. But if it should result in failure no foreign Power should attempt their re-subjugation. It would become a duty under our mantle to nourish, cherish, and protect such as could not take care of themselves. The unlocking of the rich, varied, natural stores of Mexico would redound not only to an enlarged welfare of that country, but to the good of every country interested in commerce and in enlightened civilization. She is, literally, the thriftless "talent tied up in a napkin." She can never be otherwise until we exercise a controlling influence over her. We must make her respectable and respected. She has been going down so long that she is incapable of rising. With life and property secure, it is estimated that she could produce \$100,000,000 of silver annually. Instead of fifteen or twenty miles of railroads she might in a score of years have as many hundred. With such an attractive climate and fruitful soil and variegated scenery she would become the centre of fashionable travel and the abode of enterprising industry; and the occurrence would not only command the approval, but also the admiration, of Great Britain and other European States. The London Times, which moulds rather than follows public opinion, says:

"There is not a statesman who would wish to see Great Britain hamper herself with an inch of Mexican ground. Let the United States, when they are finally prepared for it, enjoy all the advantages and responsibility of ownership, and our merchants at Liverpool and elsewhere will be quite content with the trade that may spring out of it. The capacity of the Mexican population for appreciating a constitutional rule is not so remarkable that we should volunteer to administer it."

The Monroe doctrine has been repeatedly ridiculed of recent years, and by grave Senators, as the merest of abstractions—as unmeaning and valueless. But let me tell you, sir, that but for that doctrine Texas probably had never entered your Confederacy. Canning might have yielded to Polignac for the consolidation of a monarchical or aristocratical form of government for the *cidevant* colonies of Spain, by which, of course, she would have been included as one of those colonies, had it not been for the seasonable declaration of that doctrine, and the thrill of joyous delight with which it was hailed by the votaries of liberty everywhere. On this account alone I may be pardoned for fancying that it is deserving of a worthier designation, even by the most violent tongue, than an abstraction. When Cortez returned to Madrid from his conquering expedition to America, he went to Court. The haughty Charles V., observing his stately mien as he approached him, emphatically demanded: "Who are you, sir?" "The man," replied he, "who has given you more provinces than your ancestors left you cities!" With equal truth may it be said of Texas, that she has been instrumental in giving the Union more dollars than its founders left it cents. She has been instrumental in developing its resources more in twelve years than had been previously developed in sixty. I do not mention this in a spirit of vainglory. Who could be vainglorious of such a State?—a State that is advancing with giant's strides in all that constitutes a State to the head of the column of the Southern division of the Union? The time may come—yes, will come, sir—when if she shall be as properly cared for by this Government in her intercourse with Mexico as New York has been cared for in her intercourse with the British Provinces, she may be to that division what the empire State is to the Northern division. But whatever her future power, I trust that the language of her sons will ever be, in contradistinction to the supercilious expressions which fell from the lips of a distinguished Senator a few days ago, as far as concerns the exercise of *might* for the purpose of sectional oppression:

"O! 'tis excellent  
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous  
To use it like a giant."

Whenever one section of this country presumes upon its strength for the oppression of the other, then will our Constitution be a mockery, and it would matter not



how soon it was severed into a thousand atoms and scattered to the four winds. If the principles are disregarded upon which the annexation of Texas was consummated, there will be for her neither honor nor interest in the Union; if the mighty, in the face of written law, can place with impunity an iron yoke upon the neck of the weak, Texas will be at no loss how to act, or where to go, before the blow aimed at her vitals is inflicted. In a spirit of good faith she entered the Federal fold. By that spirit she will continue to be influenced until it is attempted to make her the victim of Federal wrong. As she will violate no Federal rights, so will she submit to no violation of her rights by Federal authority. The covenant which she entered into with the Government must be observed, or it will be annulled. Louisiana was a purchase, California, New Mexico, and Utah a conquest; but Texas was a voluntary annexation. If the condition of her admission is not complied with on the one part, it is not binding on the other. If I know Texas, she will not submit to the threatened degradation foreshadowed in the recent speech of the Senator from New York. She would prefer restoration to that independence which she once enjoyed to the ignominy ensuing from sectional dictation. Sorrowing for the mistake which she had committed in sacrificing her independence at the altar of her patriotism, she would unfurl again the banner of the "lone star" to the breeze, and re-enter upon a national career, where, if no glory awaited her, she would at least be free from a subjection by might to wrong and shame. But I will dismiss such thoughts from my mind, and indulge in their stead the pleasing belief that the Federal Constitution, the Constitution of our fathers, the Constitution of compromise between conflicting interests, will ever be found potent enough to overpower the most formidable sectional opposition which may be advanced against its provisions. Beyond it, there would be but little left worth living for.

In conclusion, I trust, sir, that you will pass the resolution which I now send to the Secretary. Of the form of the protectorate I have said comparatively nothing. It will be for the committee, if ordered, to decide upon that, with such lights as may be placed before it. I have no preferences on the subject. It may assimilate to that of Great Britain over the Ionian Isles, or be entirely original in its character. No advantages in trade intercourse ought to be claimed by us which should not become common to other countries, and no more authority exercised than would be indispensable to secure obedience to salutary law.

I send to the Chair a preamble and resolution as a substitute for that which I before offered. I ask that it be read. The Clerk read as follows:

Whereas the events connected with the numerous efforts of the people of Mexico to establish upon a liable basis an orderly system of self-government have invariably resulted in complete failure; and whereas the condition of Mexico is such as to excite alarming apprehensions that she may precipitate herself into a wild condition of anarchy, and the more so as she has demonstrated from time to time her utter inability to suppress intestine commotions, and to conquer the hordes of bandits by which she was infested; and whereas the United States of America, on account of the continental policy which they cherish and desire to enforce, can never permit Mexico to be resubjugated by Spain, or placed under the dominion of any foreign Power; and whereas one of the most important duties devolving upon civilized governments is to exact from adjoining nations the observances of good neighborhood, thus shielding themselves against impending or even remote injury to their border security: Therefore—

*Resolved*, That a select committee of seven be raised to inquire and report to the Senate whether or not it is expedient for the Government of the United States of America to declare and maintain a protectorate over the so-called Republic of Mexico, in such form and to such extent as shall be necessary to secure to this Union good neighborhood, and to the people of said country the benefits of orderly and well-regulated republican government."

Mr. HUNTER. I call now for the special order.

Mr. HOUSTON. I move the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. HUNTER. I gave way for the Senator to make a speech.

Mr. HOUSTON. It will not take a moment, I hope.

Mr. SEWARD. I move that it lie on the table and be printed.

The motion was agreed to.

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